

UFI reports record event participation numbers and accredited events at 2018 General Assembly

- **UFI’s General Assembly has reviewed 12 months of activity, highlighting events, education, research, and advocacy efforts**
- **Global membership continues to grow at around 5% year on year**
- **“UFI Approved Events” certification tops 1,000 accredited exhibitions around the world**
- **Highest ever number of participants at UFI events globally**
- **Global Exhibitions Day seen as the biggest industry awareness campaign in history**

Paris/St. Petersburg, 31 October 2018 – Over 420 events professionals from UFI members in more than 50 countries met today in St. Petersburg (Russia) to review UFI’s work throughout 2018 and confirm plans for the year ahead.

The 2018 UFI General Assembly took place before UFI’s Global Congress, “The Dynamics of Transition – Our Industry’s Complex Future”. Chaired by UFI’s 2018 President, Corrado Peraboni, the General Assembly highlighted an array of new initiatives supporting UFI’s 780 members in 86 countries. Global membership has grown by another 5% this year.

Corrado Peraboni, UFI’s 2018 President comments: “It has been a busy year serving the growing global community of UFI members around the world. Never before has the UFI team organised this many meetings and events for our industry, and we have seen a record number of participants. After a year as UFI President, I can say with conviction that there is no other global community like this in our industry.”

Peraboni continues: “I especially want to highlight two developments: firstly, with the opening of our regional office in Bogota (Colombia), UFI now has a presence in all our four regions around the world. This is a vital milestone in our strategic project of ‘glocalisation’, where we are investing to serve our members close to their respective homes. Secondly, I am very happy to share that we now have more than 1,000 “UFI Approved Events” in 75 countries. This certification is a globally recognised standard of quality, as all the shows that carry it are audited.”

Over 1,300 industry professionals attended the broad array of **UFI events** around the globe, from the “Global CEO Summit” in Cannes (France) to the “UFI Global Congress” in St. Petersburg (Russia).

UFI’s Global CEO Summit, the exhibition industry’s annual curtain-raiser event, kick-started a year that saw two global events, three regional conferences and three topical meetings all around the world, with many informal meetings and gatherings as well.

UFI’s inaugural Latin American Conference was one of the year’s focal points. Hosted by AMPROFEC, it took place at the World Trade Center in Mexico City (Mexico) on 18-19 September. Around 120 people participated from 16 countries. A Latin America Chapter meeting took place alongside the event.

With UFI’s Global Congress returning to Russia this year for the first time since 2005, and for the first time ever in St. Petersburg, the association is putting the spotlight on a long-established relationship. The Russian trade fair industry is well represented in the association, with 40 members and 115 trade fairs bearing the “UFI Approved Event” label.

Education and **Next Generation Leadership** are both strategic priorities for the association. In November 2017, the inaugural class of the new UFI-VMA Venue Management School programme took place in Shanghai

(China) and was totally sold out. In 2018, one class will take place in Shanghai again on 19-21 November, with further classes planned for China and beyond in 2019.

This year also saw the tenth edition of the International Summer University, a collaboration with Kölnmesse and the University of Cologne. Several UFI-EMD programme courses were also held around the world.

In addition, UFI's talent recognition programme, the "Next Generation Leadership Grant" has expanded its scope to include individual mentoring for grantees.

UFI's **research** activities continue to evolve. The size and scope of UFI's research available to members has roughly doubled over recent years. UFI now delivers regular research insights on global, regional and topical themes.

Two new publications were released in Johannesburg in November 2017: A Compendium of Best Practices in the field of Digital Innovation, based on the shortlisted entries from the ICT/Digital Innovation Awards from recent years, and a global analysis of the likes and dislikes of exhibiting companies across regions and industry sectors.

UFI published a new, much expanded UFI World Map of Venues. In addition to aggregated global data, the report provides 28 markets profiles – covering every exhibition market with a venue capacity exceeding 200,000 sqm.

Two editions of the UFI Global Barometer report were released, covering industry developments globally and regionally, and with special profiles for 17 markets and regions. The 21st edition again includes a dedicated section on the ongoing digitisation of the industry. With Australia's EEAA and India's IAIE, new association partners joined the project, expanding the scale even further.

On top of this, regional statistics and market reports for Europe and Asia were released, as they are every year.

At the Global Congress in St. Petersburg, UFI will release two new studies:

Global Visitor Insights, produced jointly with UFI research partner Explori, will provide global trends on visitor experiences and expectations at trade shows. Based on a sample of more than 13,000 survey participants, the study is based on the biggest ever international data set collected.

Women in the exhibition industry, a joint research project between UFI and media partner m+a, will provide insights into questions relating to the advancement of women in our industry.

In terms of **Industry Advocacy**, the 3rd **Global Exhibitions Day** on 6 June 2018 turned into the largest and most far-reaching awareness campaign the exhibition industry has ever seen. Coordinated by UFI with the association's global network of association partners, the campaign recorded activities in 85 countries and regions around the world, with leading organisers, venues and service providers all playing a very active role.

In Europe, the **European Exhibition Industry Alliance** (EEIA) has represented UFI's European members and EMECA's members in Brussels since 2012. This year, the collaboration was extended for an additional three years as of 1 July 2018. The EEIA's main event this year was the second edition of the "Exhibition Industry EU Dialogue" organised in February.

In parallel, the EU-funded "Business Beyond Borders" matchmaking programme continues. Implementation for 2018 is in full swing and the last of the 10 matchmaking experiences will be organised at VISION in Stuttgart in November. Finally, EEIA continues to monitor relevant legislation and political moves in Brussels, with special focus on GDPR, posted workers, services and trade and tourism.

In Asia, UFI is now a registered NGO in China, the first international business events industry association to receive this status. It allows the association to serve as a link between the members and the authorities in a better way. Along with this status, UFI opened an UFI China Service Centre in Shanghai.

Summarising UFI's activities for 2018, Kai Hattendorf, UFI Managing Director/CEO says: "The UFI team around the world is working every day to make sure we can serve our global member community of over 50,000 industry professionals. The fact that more industry leaders and professionals are attending our events, using our research, and joining our educational offers than ever before encourages us to continue on this path.

We are very happy to welcome additional members into the UFI network around the world – the knowledge and experience they bring enables everyone to get together to explore new business opportunities in our fast evolving industry.”

UFI’s outlook for the year ahead

Over the next twelve months, UFI is set to continue with its current strategic initiatives, focusing on events, research, education, and advocacy globally.

The annual Global CEO Summit will take place in London (UK) from 30 January to 1 February. Three Regional Conferences are scheduled to take place in Tokyo (Japan) from 14-15 March, Dubai (UAE) from 8-9 April, and Birmingham (UK) from 15-17 May. The Global Congress will take place in Bangkok (Thailand) from 6-9 November. In addition, multiple UFI Forums will take place, such as the Operations & Services Forum in Birmingham (UK) from 13-14 May, with others still being scheduled. The latest overview of UFI events around the world is available on the UFI website: <https://www.ufi.org/our-events/ufi-events-calendar/>

While the Congress is only open to members, conferences and Educational Forums are open to all industry professionals.

Craig Newman, Chief Executive Officer at Johannesburg Expo Centre (JEC) (South Africa), is UFI’s 2019 President. He is joined in UFI’s new presidential leadership trio by Mary Larkin, Executive Vice President at Diversified Communications, Portland (USA), as Incoming President. As Corrado Peraboni will leave the association due to starting a new enterprise, he cannot serve as Outgoing President. Therefore, Dr Andreas Gruchow, Member of the Managing Board at Deutsche Messe AG Hanover, will stay on the presidential trio for an additional year.

UFI is grateful to all its members, partners and sponsors, notably the four Diamond Sponsors GES, Qatar Tourism Authority, Shenzhen World and TCEB.

Attachments: CV and picture of Craig Newman and picture of new presidential trio.

About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the leading global association of the world’s tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI’s main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry. UFI directly represents around 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 780 member organisations in 86 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. More than 1,000 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

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